

Message Text

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ACTION OES-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-10 CIAE-00 INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6669

INFO ERDA GERMANTOWN MD

UNCLAS OTTAWA 2156

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH, CA

SUBJ: ERDA'S NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE TASK FORCE REPORT

REF: STATE A-3800

1. INFORMATION CONTAINED IN REFAIR HAS BEEN TRANSMITTED TO AECL AND AECB PER INSTRUCTIONS. NTIS SHOULD RECEIVE SEVERAL ORDERS FROM CANADA.

2. DEPT AND ERDA MAY BE INTERESTED IN FOLLOWING ITEMS RELATED TO CANADIAN URANIUM RESERVES IN LIGHT OF SUBPARA 1 OF PARA 2 REFAIR:

A. CANADIAN RESERVES CURRENTLY BEING ESTIMATED AT TWO CONTAINED U308 PRICES. THEY ARE 15 AND 30 DOLLARS PER POUND. NOTE: THESE ARE VALUE FIGURES BASED ON COST OF DELIVERING REACTOR-GRADE U-308 AND DO NOT RPT NOT REPRESENT MARKET PRICES OF U308.

B. CURRENT CANADIAN RESERVES ESTIMATED AT 15-DOLLAR PRICES ARE BETWEEN 200,000-300,000 TONS.

C. REQUIREMENT TO MEET CANADIAN POLICY IS THAT APPROXIMATELY 5 TONS OF U308 IS REQUIRED PER INSTALLED MEGAWATT. (THIS MEETS UNCLASSIFIED

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SO-CALLED 30-YEAR RULE, I.E., ENOUGH URANIUM MUST BE

AVAILABLE TO KEEP PLANT OPERATING FOR 30 YEARS AFTER CRITICALITY).

D. PROJECT FOR INSTALLED MEGAWATTS TO THE YEAR 2000 AND ESTIMATES OF KNOWN RESERVES INDICATE THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE SUFFICIENT CANADIAN URANIUM TO MEET CANADIAN DOMESTIC REQUIREMENTS MUCH BEYOND 1995 AT THE 15-DOLLAR COST FIGURE. HOW MUCH BEYOND THIS PERIOD THE 30-\$OLLAR COST FIGURE WOULD TAKE CANADA IS NOT AUTHORITATIVELY KNOWN AT THIS TIME. IT WOULD NOT RPT NOT, HOWEVER, BE LIKELY TO EXTEND TIME SCALE BY A FACTOR OF 2.

E. ALL OF FOREGOING, NATURALLY, IS SUBJECT TO POSSIBILITY OF FINDING LARGE ADDITIONAL RESERVES RESULTING FOM CURRENT, MORE ACTIVE EXPLORATON PROGRAM. IN THE ABSENCE OF PROVEN DISCOVERIES, HOWEVER, GOVERNMENT ACTIONS MUST BE PREDICATED ON FACTORS OUTLINED ABOVE.

F. AECL EXPECTS TO HAVE TECHNICALLY PROVEN THORIUM CYCLE WITHIN 5-10 YEARS AND COMMERCIALLY PROVEN CYCLE IN LESS THAN 20 YEARS. GIVEN CANADA'S THORIUM RESERVES AND IF THIS TIME SCHEDULE IS MET, THERE SHOULD BE NO PROBLEM IN PROVIDING NUCLEARLY-GENERATED POWER TO MEET DOEMSTIC DEMANDS. COMMENT: THIS TIME SCALE ON PROVING THORIUM CYCLE IS PROBABLY CONSERVATIVE, GIVEN CURRENT STATE OF R&D AT CHALK RIVER AND WHITESHELL. PORTER

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